

ABSTRACT

Tiresome entry of numerous letters of the alphabet into a hand-held device for assembling a short text message for transmission via a short message service (SMS) to a second terminal is avoided by the sending of a short voice message (SVM). The SVM is

5 recorded in the sending terminal and sent to a SVM service center (SVMSC). The SVMSC may notify the intended recipient of the arrival of the SVM and await acceptance before sending it. The second terminal may then commence a bidirectional communication so that an instant voice message session can be established.

Alternatively, the problem can be overcome by converting the spoken SVM to text in the 10 user terminal by means of voice recognition software and sending the converted text to the recipient by means of the traditional SMS infrastructure for display as text or for playback as text converted to voice.